

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 DHA-02 /068 W
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FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4494

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 2266

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, UNGA, SHUM, UR, US

SUBJECT: SOVIETS PROBE US HUMAN RIGHTS INTENTIONS

1. DURING DISCUSSION OF 32ND GA PROPECTS JULY 13, SOVIET
DEPUTY PERM REP OVINNIKOV ASKED AMBASSADOR LEONARD WHETHER THE
US INTENDED TO TAKE ANY NEW INITIATIVES ON HUMAN RIGHTS MACHINERY
IN THE UN THIS FALL. HE OBSERVED THAT A PUSH IN THIS AREA COULD
SPOIL THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE ENTIRE GA. LEONARD REPONDED THAT
WE CERTAINLY INTEND TO CONSIDER THESE HUMAN RIGHTS MATTERS, BUT
MUCH WILL DEPEND ON WHETHER THERE HAS BEEN IMPROVEMENT IN THIS
AREA. WE INTEND TO CONSIDER IN THE THIRD COMMITTEE ALL OF
PRESIDENT CARTER'S SUGGESTION, SEEKING TO DETERMINE WHICH OF
THEM HAS GENERAL SUPPORT. THE US, HOWEVER, REMAIN OPEN-MINDED
ON HOW TO MAKE HUMAN RIGHTS MACHINERY MORE EFFECTIVE.

2. OVINNIKOV ABRUPTLY ASKED WHETHER THE US INTENDED TO "COME
FORTH WITH A LIST OF CRIMINALS, OR ANYTHING." LEONARD
SAID THAT WE HAD NO SUCH INTENTIONS, BUT THAT THE SOVIETS, IN-
CLUDING SOVIET DIPLOMATS LIKE OVINNIKOV, HAVE OVER-REACTED TO OUR
SUGGESTION, CONCLUDING FAR MORE THAN WE HAD INTENDED. EVEN
THE DISTORTIONS OF THE PRESS ARE NO EXCUSE FOR SUCH OVER-
REACTION.

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3. COMMENT: OVINNIKOV'S QUERY MAY HAVE BURST FORTH SOME-
WHAT MORE ABRUPTLY AND AWKWARDLY THAN HE WOULD HAVE WISHED,
BUT WE TOOK IT THAT HE WAS UNDER INSTRUCTIONS TO PROBE US ON
OUR INTENTIONS. WE THINK IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO PICK UP THE
OPENING HE GAVE US TO GO BACK TO TROYANOSKY (BEFORE HIS SCHEDULED
DEPARTURE FOR MOSCOW NEXT WEEK) TO ELABORATE OUR PRESENT VIEW OF

OUR POSTURE ON HUMAN RIGHTS THIS FALL. WE HAVE BELIEVE WE SHOULD
MAKE CLEAR OUR POSITION IN PRINCIPLE, BUT ALSO OUR INTENTION NOT
TO LASH OUT AT THE SOVIET UNION OR ANY OTHER COUNTRY IN THE
COURSE OF OUR WORK ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE ASSEMBLY. AT THE
SAME TIME, IT WOULD BE A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO USE THIS REASSURANCE
AS A COUNTERBALANCE TO A CALL ON THE SOVIETS SIMILARLY TO
EXERCISE RESTRAINT IN THEIR TRADITIONAL MULTITUDINOUS ATTACKS
ON US ON A WIDE RANGE OF SUBJECTS. THOSE, TOO, CAN SPOIL THE
ATMOSPHERE OF A GA.

LEONARD

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Message Attributes

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